

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 24, 2003

The Honorable Don Young
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James L. Oberstar
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Young and Ranking Member Oberstar:

As Members of the Congressional Northern Border Caucus, we urge you to make adjustments to ensure that border infrastructure receives adequate funding within the Borders and Corridors Program.

The bipartisan Northern Border Caucus is a 55-Member caucus that was originally formed in 1994 by former-Congressman John J. LaFalce. We seek to highlight policy concerns on issues affecting U.S.-Canadian relations and our economic partnership.

One issue critical to Members from border districts is the reauthorization of TEA-21 funding, particularly the Borders and Corridors Program. We agree that addressing two key concerns will strengthen the Borders and Corridors Program and enhance the transportation infrastructure at our borders and along our trade corridors. First, we should split the funding streams of sections 1118 and 1119, and second we should determine a realistic funding ratio between the two sections.

The way the program is currently designed, funding for Section 1118, the National corridor planning and development program, and Section 1119, the Coordinated border infrastructure and safety program, have in practice been combined into a single funding stream for the Borders and Corridors Program. Unfortunately, over the past 5 fiscal years, 86 percent of the funding for the combined program has gone to corridors, compared to only 14 percent for borders. Further, a disproportionately small portion of the 14 percent has been directed toward the Northern Border.

We support a division between these two funding pots, and encourage a significant portion of the funding allocated for these sections be dedicated to Section 1119 and be used within 50 miles of U.S. land borders. The division of these programs will help with the implementation of many of the new measures aimed at increasing the security of our homeland. Operations at our ports of entry play an integral role in the security of our borders and our supply chain. Additional funding, dedicated for borders, will help fund even more increased security measures at all ports of entry.

Our Caucus also believes a specific ratio of funding should be defined for the borders and corridors separated funding streams. We support at least 50 percent of the funding being allocated to

our nation's border infrastructure. It is time to make up that vast disparity and provide enough funding to the borders so that they may process our country's ever-burgeoning trade and move it quickly onto NAFTA trade corridors.

Many border communities, border state Governors and various border and trade groups support these positions as well. Making these changes will be widely supported and hailed as a victory for border communities.

We appreciate your consideration of these important issues.

Cordially,

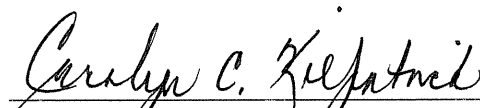

GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.
Co-Chair, Northern Border Caucus

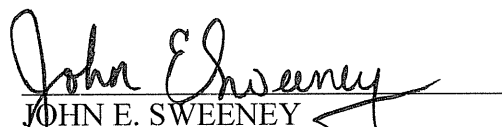

BART STUPAK
Co-Chair, Northern Border Caucus



RICK LARSEN
Representative in Congress


MICHAEL R. McNULTY
Representative in Congress



DALE E. KILDEE
Representative in Congress

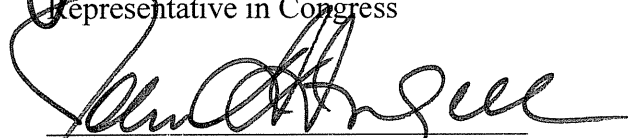

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